

MINUTES OF THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC HEARING OF THE ARIZONA STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Public Hearing on Draft FY 2007-2011 MAG Transportation Improvement Program and Draft 2006 Update of the Regional Transportation Plan

Friday, March 10, 2006 at 12:00 p.m.

MAG Offices, Saguaro Room

302 North 1st Avenue, Second Floor

Phoenix, Arizona 85003

The State Transportation Board met in official session for a public hearing at 12:00 p.m., Friday, March 10, 2006, with Vice Chairman Joe Lane and Keno Hawker, Mayor of Mesa co-chairing the meeting. Other board members present included: Delbert Householder and Felipe Zubia (waiting to be confirmed). Chairman Gant, Dick Hileman, Jim Martin, Bob Montoya and Si Schorr were absent. Also present were ADOT Director Victor Mendez, Dale Buskirk, Division Director, Aeronautics Division and Bill Hayden, Special Assistant RFS, and the Director of Metro Rail. There were approximately 40 people in the audience.

CALL TO ORDER/OPENING REMARKS

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Chairman Hawker stated that the public meeting was one component of the MAG mid-phase public involvement opportunity to provide comment on both the MAG plan and the ADOT plans. In attendance was the State Transportation Board, Valley Metro and Metro, Citizens Transportation Oversight Committee, ADOT and the City of Phoenix Public Transit Department representatives in attendance. The MAG representative on the panel, Councilmember Elkins representing the City of Surprise, was introduced. Members from the Citizens Transportation Oversight committee were introduced: CTOC Chairman, Roc Arnett, Mr. Lunsford, Mr. Ladd, Mr. Rainey and Mr. Davis. David Boggs, Executive Director with Valley Metro

PRESENTATIONS

Draft 2006 Update of the Regional Transportation Plan

Roger Herzog, MAG Senior Project Manager, provided an update. The Regional Transportation Plan was adopted in 2003 as a result of a comprehensive plan update. The plan was updated in 2004 to reflect light rail transit schedules, construction, and in 2005 to reflect changes in phasing of highway and arterial projects. The 2006 update covers 2007-2026. The changes are updating of the revenue forecasts and inclusion of the freeway, arterial and transit life cycle program. These programs are 20-year projects with specific programs that show projects by year and they are consistent with the original priorities and funding allocations in the regional transportation Plan and they are being included in the Plan to allow more specific monitoring and updating of the program. The half-cent funding represents the biggest part of the overall funding for the Plan. ADOT funds and federal funds are significant elements. Uses of the funds include bus, light rail, streets and freeways.

Roger Herzog provided an overview of the Freeway/Highway Life Cycle Program and stated that the half-cent monies are the biggest portion and ADOT funding is the other significant part. The funds go to widening of virtually all of the segments of the existing system including the HOV lanes and general purpose lanes and construction of new corridors including Loop 303; the South Mountain Freeway and the Williams Gateway Freeway. The Arterial Life Cycle Program is a total of \$2.9 billion half-cent funding, the most significant source. That goes to capacity and intersection improvements. The Transit Life Cycle Program is a total of \$9.4 billion. As with other programs, the half-cent funding is the significant block of funding, and federal funds also play an important role. This funding goes to bus operations and bus capital and then light rail capital. The next step in the update process includes this public meeting. In April, the comments and the Plan will be considered by the MAG committee for approval for air quality conformity analysis. The analysis will be conducted in May. In June, there will be another hearing on the Plan and the air quality results and then consideration of the Plan for adoption in July.

Draft FY 2007-2011 MAG TIP

Paul Ward, MAG Transportation Programming Manager, presented the Fiscal Year 2007-2011 Draft MAG TIP. The Plan contains major transportation projects with a schedule to be carried out within a metropolitan planning area within the next five years. This Draft Plan builds on the last program. Slides describing the TIP process were presented. Federal guidelines require that metropolitan areas periodically develop a Transportation Improvement Plan. This Plan shall include all projects utilizing title 23 cycle transportation funds with some exceptions regarding safety, emergency and/or planning funds. Due to air quality concerns, all regionally significant projects within the region need to come from a Congestion Management System. The TIP needs to be developed every four years, however, to stay completely up-to-date with air quality plans in a fast growing region and to allow for maximum flexibility, MAG TIP is usually developed every year. New MAG federally funded projects have been added to Fiscal Year 2011 and ADOT and transit projects were added by the end of December. Locally funded projects were added or changed in January, and the TIP is expected to be approved for air quality conformity analysis together with the update of the Regional Transportation Plan by the end of April. This analysis is expected to be completed by June, and the Regional Council is expected to approve the TIP by the end of July 2006. Data primarily comes from federal, state and local agencies, private developers, MAG transportation plans and the Unified Planning Work Program. Further input is provided by members of the public, MAG Technical Advisory Committees and MAG staff. Detail on all of the projects being submitted is necessary to enable MAG staff to conduct an air quality conformity analysis in accordance with conformity requirements. Currently, the largest component of funds is almost \$2.3 billion from regional funding, representing 34 percent of the total. Local funds are committed to highways and transit projects, a combined total \$1.76 billion, about 27 percent. Federal highway and transit funds are next at just over \$1.66 billion. State highway and state transit funds are at \$633 million. The remaining \$3.6 million worth of funds are private funds at \$236 million. The total of \$6.34 billion represents an annual increase of more than 12 percent from the previous program. The funds available are shared between freeways and street projects and transit projects, the largest share being street projects with almost 50 percent, almost a 30 percent increase from the last program. The transit has a slight percentage increase. The remaining \$18 million is going to air quality projects. The percentage of MAG federal funds committed to freeways dropped from 39 percent to almost 37. Street projects have increased the largest amount, 23.5 percent.

Valley Metro/RPTA Update

David Boggs provided a Valley Metro/RPTA update. The Regional Transportation Plan adopted in 2003 and updated in 2005 identifies a comprehensive program of transit capital and operating investments that will be undertaken over the next twenty years. Proposition 400 funded that program. There are a number of bus rapid transit corridor studies. A safety and security planning study will be done this year. A Proposition 400 readiness study, which is really called Service Admission and Effectiveness, is a study that helps us develop performance measures required by the law. An audit element will be added. Audit of financial capabilities done every year was outstanding. There are two committees, an Operational and Capital Committee and a Financial Oversight Committee as part of making sure that the plan is built as planned and that it's financially strong. There is a 20-year strategic plan that requests the Board to select a consultant to look at the region and steps needed to get to the end. It was indicated there will be no new equipment until December 2006. There are a number of bus services coming up as part of Proposition 400.

ADOT's Tentative FY 2006-2011 MAG Regional Freeway System/RTP Freeway Program Recommendations

Bill Hayden, Special Assistant Regional Freeway System, addressed the tentative Fiscal Years 2006-2011 Regional Transportation Plan Freeway Program and the Regional Freeway System Program Recommendations. The Draft update of fiscal 2006 has been developed among ADOT and MAG staff and MAG members and it reflects the following changes: the dramatically increased construction commodity and right-of-way costs. As a result of those impacts, ranging between 50 percent over what had previously been estimated, there was a \$120 million exceedance of that cost that had been previously projected for the region for 2006. The best cost effective approach to addressing cost overages was to delay projects. Eight projects were identified that had been scheduled for 2006 and will be delayed to 2007. These were projects that would not have been constructed in '06 due to either engineering, environmental or project-development issues. The second element of the program was the modification to the program to ensure that the program would remain in balance with the cash flow. The specific projects that constituted the \$100 million overage were highlighted. The second part of the program is the remaining 2007-2011 projects. There are fifteen projects that reflect a one or two year – fiscal deferment. Twenty-three project cost increases total \$87 million. The programs were highlighted. Currently there is 79 miles of HOV lanes of the valley freeway systems through the Regional Transportation Plan. One hundred fifty eight more miles of HOV lanes will be added. The next segment of the project includes HOV lanes and general purpose lanes. There are three projects: the section from the 101 Freeway to the Carefree Highway where general purpose lanes and HOV lanes will be added, Section of the I-10 in South Central Phoenix, San Tan Freeway, to Riggs Road in fiscal '09 general purpose lanes and HOV lanes. And a project that's currently under construction on US 60 between Val Vista to Power Road. \$30 million was advanced from Fiscal '08 to '07 to initiate construction of the traffic interchange on I-17. The next eight years an additional thirty three miles of rubberized asphalt will be added to the existing program and there are various Transportation Corridor Studies that are either underway, nearing completion or have been completed; an I-10 reliever, the Williams Gateway connector, the Access Management Study for State route 74 and studies underway including the South Mountain EIS process. For the five years, the cumulative total of \$2.98 billion is the most ambitious program

undertaken; and it was the first phase of the Regional Transportation Program.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Robin Petty, transit rider and an Arizona citizen is concerned about the light rail construction because she lives in the Westward Ho, which is at Fillmore and Central Avenue. Already one person died because of the construction and they had five blackouts. She used to live in Salt Lake City where there was a program when the light rail was being built called Forty Bucks. They gave people in the building paper money to help them get used to knowing the light rail was being built so they could go to the stores. At Westward Ho, when the electricity goes out, the air, the oxygen and all that goes out; there are people that are on oxygen in that building. When they work at night, that's when the problem hits. The people can't sleep with the noise. In Salt Lake City, they worked during the daytime. They didn't work at night because they were thinking of the people that lived in the buildings.

Richard Tracy, Mesa Arizona, has been a resident in the area for thirty five years. This particular community is getting a very ambitious program, but it's tied into other things that occur. And our biggest offenders to the pollution are caused by our governmental agencies. They have refused to decentralize. He avoids coming downtown because he thinks it's his duty to stay off the road. The duty of this particular transportation department would be not only to provide roads but to shorten the trip for people who are using those roads. In 1973, a survey warned that if we didn't watch ourselves, we would be in the same predicament as Los Angeles. That's occurred. They finally have decentralized. With the commute today, it's easier to decentralize; but we have control over our governmental agencies. We can't tell a developer what to do, perhaps, but we can control our courts. He prepared comments to the environmental department in Los Angeles regarding expanding the use of the reliever airports and eliminating growth at sky Harbor. He thinks they ought to take down Terminal Two and send some of the traffic east and west because we have a million people on both sides of the valley who would not have to drive downtown if we reduce the amount of traffic going into Sky Harbor. He said that he spends an hour and a half going eight miles across town because of an accident on Route 10.

Dan Cook, Deputy Public Works Director, City of Chandler, extended thanks to MAG and MAG staff for working on the LAC program. It was an excellent document that he thinks will serve the region very well in progressing through the 20-year Regional Transportation Plan for the arterial street side of the program. Valley Metro did a great job in the Transit Life Cycle Program. He is thankful for the completion of the San Tan Freeway in Chandler. It has been a great enhancement to the transportation system in the east valley as well as helping with the economic development potential. He was glad to see the I-10 Riggs Road interchange funded and looks forward to that project starting. It's a very desperately needed upgrade to that interchange. He noted that the ADOT Aeronautics Group has supported a request from the City of Chandler for improvements to an access road that is greatly needed to help benefit Chandler Municipal Airport and has proposed funding for a terminal area storm drain. Regarding the storm drain, they asked FAA for funding and are probably not going to get it. He asked ADOT to consider making that possible.

Bill Crowley referenced newspaper articles, Air Pollution Affecting More People and Cleaner Air on the Way. Don't Hold Your Breath. He referenced a 1995 map and said the current one

doesn't show what we're going to be doing with the bus and it doesn't go to the extent that it's supposed to. One of the places that he suggested in last year's mid-phase was with the first road under super grid, Scottsdale Road. He asked why isn't it going to go all the way and extend into Cave Creek and Carefree and when you look at the second roads being build, Chandler Boulevard and Glendale, it stops at 24th and goes into that high transit corridor, the Biltmore. That isn't what happened. He suggested getting at least that one going all the way through to Scottsdale. He noticed that we're not doing anything for the bicycles or the pedestrians when we're using six-foot sidewalks. The plan is intermodal. He would like consideration of what's going to be happening county-wide. He handed out the bicycle map and also the extension of the buses that come down into Ajo and Gila Bend, which is a positive. He suggested consideration for penny-per-dollar gas taxes. The rural highways are still behind. He asked they look at the rail, both the commuter and the freight and the need to be going northeast to take the freight, using the commuter rail within the system. The TIP 2007-2009 has the bridge integrity. The Canamex is going to be going to Central Phoenix and should be going out from 85 to Vulture Mine Road and to the 60 and 93.

Martin Shultz, Vice President, Capital Corporation was co-chairman of the 21 Transportation Task Force. He is interested as a civic person and as a business person in transportation. The plans are very large compared to what they used to be and are very complex. He thinks we need to have a transportation plan for Arizona and it needs to be accelerated, to celebrate progress and to acknowledge the challenge of constructing the ADOT and the MAG plans already adopted evaluating the demographic changes and population growth versus transportation capacity in that regard. His company has done an analysis of population growth. All of the plans are built on a base that is substantially lower in growth. Next, we need the greater Maricopa and Pinal County paradigm because we cannot exist just planning Maricopa County. "To determine to accelerate" is a major threshold policy in our community because we're so filled with responsibility and \$18 billion in the Proposition 400 plan, the ADOT plan on top of all that all the population and construction activities used. We need to evaluate the congested data to determine the priorities identified in the revenue. We need to bond forward. We need to build a new accelerated transportation plan for Arizona.

Deborah Williams, lives in the west valley, Arizona, is a former employee of Arizona Department of Transportation and worked for other governmental agencies as secretary and administrative. She is disabled and is mandatory on Valley Metro Transit. She asked why do all public transit, Dial a Ride, Light Rail and freeway projects take decades from consultation to allocation to funding to federal grants to tax dollars, bonds, to a ten-year delay or more for 1990 Light rail or 2000 whatever we're going to add to the Valley metro public transit. She's still waiting for better buses. And then we have a budget and time frames that are never met such as the 2002 Valley Metro Public Transit that will never be extended to the major metropolitan city. She's still wondering why the people who are the bottom never get the services. She was working for the County when the bonding for the 2000 bus improvement kept failing. She can't afford a car payment and she's tired of the buses. She can't get to work on time or do grocery shopping. She's wondering when we're going to get a bus system let alone a light rail. The bus system is inadequate especially if you're disabled.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chairman Joe Lane adjourned the Arizona Department of Transportation meeting. Chairman Hawker thanked members of the CTOC and other members present for their attendance. The meeting adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

James W. Martin, Chairman
State Transportation Board

Victor M. Mendez, Director
Arizona Department of Transportation